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ABSTRACT

Role theory, which posits that people play parts determined to some extent by others' expectations, was used in an investigation of the relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists. Twelve journalists and 14 public relations practitioners were asked to describe both roles in terms of a variety of attributes or characteristics by means of a Q sort. The descriptions were then compared by using factor analysis to islolate the predominant patterns of perception of each role. The primary findings were that journalists and public relations practitioners differed sharply in their perceptions of the public relations role, while both have similar perceptions of the journalistic role. An additional finding indicated that public relations practitioners suffer from intrarole conflict, which results from facing varying expectations from different audiences. (Items used in the Q sort and demographic data about the respondents are included in appendixes.) (FL)

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PUBLIC RELATIONS DIVISION

CROSS PERCEPTIONS:

JOURNALISTS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS

GQ EYEBALL TO EYEBALL

by

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CROSS PERCEPTIONS:
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INTRODUCTION

The relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists remains vaguely defined and, to some, a source of tension. Issues of contention or disagreement have been framed largely by changes in the professions themselves. Those who advocate a reconciliation of the two roles come primarily from the public relations side, while journalistic purists have resisted the notion of PR people joining the ranks of "professional communicator."

This ill-defined relationship has raised a number of issues, including those of ethics and skills.[1] Ethical questions pertaining to journalistic ideals pose difficulties, especially in the face of pervasive growth of the public relations profession.

Nonetheless, the early reputation of public relations as mere press agentry has faded to be replaced by an image of increasing responsibility. The evolving reputation is due in part to tougher professional standards among PR

practitioners. The growth of the PR field, together with its ties to the media, has focused increasing attention on the relationship of the journalistic and public relations roles.

It is this relationship which is the subject of this study. Using role theory as a central theoretical foundation, we sought to clarify basic cross perceptions between professionals in the two roles. By identifying and comparing predominant patterns of perception of the roles, this study could provide a basis for future research analyzing the extent to which these views are held by others and perhaps seeking ways to resolve or temper inherent conflict between the professional roles.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining the Roles

Research on journalistic and public relations roles has often been limited to analysis of one role or the other.[2] Occasionally the relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners has been studied. Jeffers remarked that most of this research has focused on two aspects of the relationship--ethics and skills.[3] Studies emphasizing ethical considerations discuss, for example, PR prizes to newspeople, news decisions by newspeople based on advertising sales and other questions of news value. Studies emphasizing skills focus on the PR process: testing whether PR people are capable of performing journalistic

procedures, testing whether PR people are aware of journalistic practices and comparing skills between the professions.

Aronoff in a survey study found that journalists have "negative attitudes" toward public relations practitioners. He also concluded that journalists perceive opposite news value orientations and occupational status compared to what public relations people think of themselves.[4] Feldman's research earlier had predicted this. The Feldman study uncovered a large gap between journalists' perception of public relations and the practitioners' perception of themselves, noting:

> A recent study of what the city editor thinks (or, more accurately, what he says he thinks) of the PR man revealed that the city editor has a concept which is different from the concept the PR man has of himself.[5]

Jeffers found a skewed perception among journalists: they considered practitioners whom they knew and worked with to be status-equals. However, practitioners with whom they had little acquaintance were thought to be unequal in status. Furthermore, Jeffers stated, "...The conclusion that cooperativeness-competitiveness is linked to status equality-inequality on the functional level for newsmen is an important theoretical finding."[6]

While Aronoff and Jeffers both found widely varying perceptions of public relations, neither study used role theory, nor has any study compared the perceived roles of

journalism and public relations. In view of the considerable body of role theory available and considering the apparent relatedness of the two professions, it seems appropriate to apply existing role theory to cross perceptions of the two roles.

Role Theory

The theoretical construct of role has been applied to a broad range of human behavior. Using the drama metaphor, role theory suggests that people play parts determined, to some extent, by others' expectations. Role-playing is governed by norms. Norms can be either heavy sanctions, such as laws, or more mild sanctions, called mores. Professional roles, a distinct category of roles, are governed by norms.

Role research has demonstrated different types of role conflict. Inter-role conflict arises when two contradictory roles are held simultaneously by the same person. Intra-role conflict, meanwhile, arises when a person is faced with contradictory expectations of the same role. Both types of role conflict are discussed by Gross, McEachern and Mason, who also present models for its resolution.[7]

Role theory helped to suggest and organize the cross perceptions that served as the basis for this research. Thus, role theory helped to identify categories of rights, duties and other attributes in describing one's role as well as in describing other roles. Role theory would seem to

present a rich theoretical background for the study of two interacting roles. Theories about role conflict, role norms and role presentation are employed in the discussion of the implications of the findings of this research. Each area bears on the discussion of perceived roles and the interplay between them.

RESEARCH QUESTION

We designed the research to describe and compare predominant patterns of perception of the journalistic and public relations roles. Role theory was the central theoretical framework while Q-methodology was employed to carry out the research.[8] We applied this methodology to the specific roles of journalist and public relations practitioner as they relate to each other. People from both professional roles were considered the primary creators and definers of these roles. Accordingly they were asked to describe both roles in terms of a variety of attributes or characteristics through the use of a Q-sort. These descriptions were compared by using factor analysis to isolate the predominant patterns of perception of each role. The descriptions of these patterns or factors and the ensuing comparison of them was the primary goal of the research.

METHODOLOGY

Development of Instrument

We chose Q-methodology because it serves well as a method for tapping the subjective perceptions of people and because it allows types to form around latent perceptions.[9] The methodology does not prescribe types. The perceptions cluster together, with an attraction of their own, to form types. Neither does Q-methodology define the distribution of perceptions. Rather, it exclaims the existence of patterns of perceptions. We set out to describe and compare these existing patterns.

The scope of the concourse--that is, the spectrum of perceptions--was designed to include two roles: journalism and public relations. By attaching the title "professional communicator" to both roles, a common concourse of statements was used by persons from both professions to describe their own and the other profession's roles.

Role theory suggests two basic aspects of role: rights and duties. These dual aspects formed the basis for categorizing statements in the Q-sample. Jeffers asserted that most research on the practitioner-journalist relationship focuses on skills and ethics.[10] Kent's research on the roles of TV reporters used the categories of rights, skills and personal characteristics.[11] For this study, four categories of role were formed: rights, duties, skills and personal characteristics. These categories were used as an

organizing device, rooted in theory, and not as theoretically based analytic categories to be tested. Because of the evolutionary nature of the development of the statements, it was necessary to organize them in some way to assure comprehensiveness. It was not our intent to carry out a systematic analysis of these categories and their relationship to the various types which emerged.

We went to a variety of sources for data to specify and define these categories. Journalism and public relations textbooks initially provided aspects of the journalist's and public relations practitioner's roles.[12] Discussions of news values were analyzed to derive aspects of the roles. These were placed in the Q-sample under the categories of skill and duty. Discussions of professionalism were examined to find other aspects of the two roles. Among other documents we examined Canons of Journalism, adopted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors at its annual convention in 1975, and the Public Relations Society of America Code of Professional Standards, adopted in 1959 and amended in 1963.

Approximately 50 statements were developed as a result of this literature search. Gaining diversity of perspective was the primary objective in the selection of statements. Many were taken verbatim from texts, while others were built from the combination of basic ideas in the literature.

The statements were examined by practitioners in journalism and public relations to gain their suggestions.

Final editing of the statements came through a pretest on five respondents. Their reactions were recorded, and the statements were modified to reduce misunderstandings. The final Q-sample numbered 54 statements (see Appendix A for a complete list).

Selection of Subjects

As in the development of the concourse of statements, diversity was a key objective in the selection of subjects. Subjects were selected from an area approximately 125 miles in diameter in eastern and central Iowa. Journalists were chosen who had specific editorial decision-making power over public relations material. Accordingly, upon first contact with the news organization, we posed the question: "May we speak to the person who handles news releases and public relations materials?" Fourteen such journalists participated from the following kinds of news organizations:

4 Daily Newspapers (Circ. 50,000+)
1 Weekly Newspaper (Circ. 5,000-)
3 TV Stations
3 Radio Stations (Major Metropolitan Area: 50,000+)
2 Radio Stations (Small Metropolitan Area: 10,000-)

Public relations practitioners were sought who carry out the specific task of media relations. Fifteen such PR practitioners participated from the following kinds of organizations:

3 Major Corporations
2 Moderate-Size Businesses
2 Hospitals
1 University
1 Four-Year College

1 Community College
2 Local Service Organizations
1 Utility
1 Government Press Secretary

Of 32 practitioners from both professions who initially agreed to participate, three failed to return their sorts. They included two weekly newspaper publishers and one corporate public relations official. One TV station was represented by two journalists. The university involved also had two representatives among the subjects. Demographic data for the journalists and public relations practitioners appear in Appendix B.

Collection of Data

Respondents were instructed to sort the Q-statements twice: once as they perceived their own role, and once as they perceived the other professional role. Twenty-nine respondents thus produced 58 sorts. Each respondent was instructed which role to complete first (this was randomized), and was also instructed to reshuffle the statements between sortings. The items were sorted into a forced, modified normal distribution having 11 piles (for the specific distribution, see end of Appendix A).

Each respondent made verbal commitment to participate in the study, either in person or by telephone, before the research materials were left. The deck of statements and the response form was either left with the respondent or mailed. Arrangements for returning the form were made

either by pick-up or by postage paid mail. None of the interviews was conducted in person by the researcher, and respondents were encouraged to carry out the task at home when ample time was available. We collected the data over a four-month period.

Analysis of Data

This study used the QUANAL computer program, available from the University of Iowa Weeg Computer Center. It is a generalized program for Q-factor analysis utilizing Pearson product moment correlation. The principal axis factor solutions were obtained, followed by Varimax rotation. Factor scores were computed for each Varimax factor.

Results of the 58 sorts were transcribed, entered on the computer and analyzed using the QUANAL program. The 29 journalism role sorts were analyzed, yielding one factor. Similarly, the 29 public relations role sorts yielded two factors. While more than one factor solution was examined for each analysis, including hand rotation, the one-factor journalism solution and the two-factor public relations solution were selected as the best summations of all attempted analyses. Stephenson's criterion for defining prototypical representatives for each of the factors was used. This criterion states that to be a prototype the largest loading must exceed a .40 correlation. In addition, all secondary loadings, if any, must be less than a .40 correlation.[13] To estimate the item array or factor scores

for each type, the Q-sorts of the prototypes representing each factor were averaged, weighting each sort by a function of the square of the factor loading.[14] The arrays for each pair of types were compared by subtraction.

Factor arrays for each of the three types appear in Appendix A. In the text (see "Results") Tables 1-3 contain only the most agreed with items (z scores > 1 50) and the least agreed with items (z scores < -1.50) from each of the three factor arrays. The top and bottom items in each array thus defined constituted the items most descriptive or characteristic of each type. Tables 4-6 contain only those items for which the absolute difference between the z scores exceeded 2.00 for the pair of types being compared by subtraction. These would be the items which most differentiate one type from another.

RESULTS

We present the results of the Q analyses in four sections here. The first section examines the correlations between the two sorts. The second concerns perceptions of the journalistic role. A single pattern, or type, emerged. The third section is a description and comparison of the two types which emerged from the analysis of perceptions of the public relations role. The fourth is a comparison of each of the PR types with the journalistic type.[15]

Individual Correlation of Sorts

Each person sorted the set of statements twice. The degree to which these two sorts were alike was given by the correlation, with 1.00 signifying identical sorts, and -1.00 signifying opposite sorts. The median correlation for all respondents was .28. The correlation is basically an index of the consistency between each person's views of the two professions. The correlations were examined to see if differences existed between PR people's responses and journalists' responses. Of the 15 persons' correlations at the median or above, 12 were public relations practitioners. Of the 14 correlations below the median, 11 were journalists. The correlations between the Q sorts of the two roles were higher for PR practitioners than for journalists. The median for the PR practitioners in the sample was .31, while the median for the journalists was very close to zero.

These results were an initial indication that the journalists have more widely disparate perceptions of the two roles than do PR practitioners. Within the sample, most journalists viewed the two roles as different, while most PR practitioners viewed the two roles as having some similarity. This confirms earlier research by Aronoff.[16]

Perceptions of the Journalistic Role

The analysis involved 29 separate sorts for the journalistic role. A single factor solution was used which

provided a strong traditional journalistic stereotype. Using .40 as a criterion, 26 of 29 persons were defined as prototypical for this type. Three persons (all PR) failed to meet the .40 criterion, but two of them had correlations close to it.

Type J-I: Consensual Perspective on the Journalistic Role

This research indicated that professional communicators in this sample held percpetions of the journalistic role that tend to be associated with traditional notions of journalism. A perusal of the statements most characteristic of this type (see Table 1) showed strong agreement that the journalistic role involves accuracy, fairness, objectivity, balance and informativeness. It also showed disagreement that the role involves withholding information, keeping a hidden agenda, making ethical compromises, advocating a particular position or emphasizing a specialized education.

This stereotypical journalistic role is not likely to go without debate. Questions have been raised about fairness, objectivity and balance in reporting. Some argue these traits do not exist in journalism--that in fact, opposite sentiments might more accurately describe the journalistic process. Recent criticism of the media also has dealt with other, equally provocative issues, including withholding information, keeping a hidden agenda and making ethical compromises--suggesting that traits like these more accurately reflect today's journalism.[17]

Table 1

Description of Type J-I: Most and Least Agreed with Items

5.	The professional communicator gives accurate information. (D)	2.20
44.	The professional communicator seeks to provide fairness in reporting. (D)	1.82
7.	A professional communicator takes an objective approach to most issues; he or she tries to avoid personal opinion entering in. (PC)	1.67
10.	The professional communicator provides as much balance as possible on issues about which he or she reports. (D)	1.54
42.	It is the right of the professional communicator to advocate a particular position. (R)	-1.72
54.	A professional communicator occasionally has to be prepared to make some ethical compromises in the interests of getting the required job done. (D)	-1.94
27.	A professional communicator has a "hidden agenda" behind his or her apparent purpose. (D)	-2.07
53.	The professional communicator keeps information from the audience in some cases--to help protect the organization on which he or she is reporting. (D)	-2.48

This research suggests that such critical approaches are not prevalent among members of this sample. Respondents in this study held a consensus view of the journalistic role. The consensus upheld traditional journalistic standards. This may reflect the common educational background and socialization which both journalists and many PR practitioners have undergone in journalism schools. Whatever its roots, there was strong agreement about the journalistic role in this sample which cannot be ignored.

Perceptions of Public Relations Role

This analysis involved 29 separate sorts for the public relations role. According to the criterion of .40, prototypical individuals were identified for each factor. These were individuals who were highly and cleanly associated with each factor. Each of the two factors was defined by 11 prototypical respondents.

The professional role of the respondent was related strongly to the factor on which he or she had the highest factor loading. For Type PR-I, 11 of the 13 persons were journalists. For PR-II, 13 of the 16 were PR practitioners. Among prototypical individuals, all 11 for Type PR-I were journalists. For Type PR-II, 10 of the 11 were PR practitioners. There was a strong relationship between each respondent's professional role and his or her view of public relations.

Type PR-I: Journalistic Perspective on the PR Role

The eleven prototypical respondents who formed the first PR type were all journalists. These respondents perceived that public relations involved advocacy, persuasion, withholding of information and aggressiveness (for the most characteristic items, see Table 2). When contrasted with the consensual view of the journalistic role, their views indicated a negative perception of public relations. Journalists did give credit to public relations

people for having strong abilities to construct interesting and "digestible" messages.

Table 2

Description of Type PR-I: Most and Least Agreed with Items

42.	It is the right of the professional communicator to advocate a particular position. (R)	2.22
53.	The professional communicator keeps information from the audience in some cases--to help protect the organization on which he or she is reporting. (D)	1.73
4.	A professional communicator is able to persuade. (S)	1.63
22.	A professional communicator may persuade his or her audience. (R)	1.51
50.	The professional communicator protects the public interest. (D)	-1.59
10.	The professional communicator provides as much balance as possible on issues about which he or she reports. (D)	-1.73
7.	A professional communicator takes an objective approach to most issues; he or she tries to avoid personal opinion entering in. (PC)	-2.12

Journalists also indicated that public relations is not concerned with objectivity, balance or fairness. They stated that public relations does little to protect the public interest or to be "independent and resistant to favor seekers."

Type PR-I perceptions, like Type J-I views, are likely to be debated. Public relations manuals and textbooks expound ideals opposite to the perceptions of this group.

Nonetheless, this research indicated a very negative perception of PR by journalists.

Type PR-II: Public Relations Perspective on the PR Role

A second type was formed by 11 other prototypical members of the sample. But this time 10 of the 11 were public relations practitioners. Statements most characteristic of this type are shown in Table 3.

Concurrent with PR literature, Type PR-II perceptions reflected that current PR practitioners are accurate, are able to construct clear messages, and are forthright, honest and informative. They disagreed, as did the journalists about journalism, that public relations involves ethical compromises or hidden agendas. They also expressed disagreement that PR practitioners challenge the status quo, have the ability to suspend moral and ethical judgments for other considerations or need a specialized education.

Type PR-II perceptions were not surprising in that they were perceptions of PR people about their own profession. Presumably, they learned some of what they believe about public relations from PR textbooks. Their current perceptions were fully consistent with these ideals.

Comparison of Type PR-I and Type PR-II

The greatest difference between the two basic views of public relations (for the most differentiating items, see Table 4) came in the areas of ethical compromises, hidden

Table 3

Description of Type PR-II: Most and Least Agreed with Items

5.	The professional communicator gives accurate information. (D)	2.28
11.	A professional communicator has the ability to construct clear mass communications messages. (S)	1.82
1.	Forthrightness and honesty are personal characteristics of the professional communicator. (PC)	1.61
26.	The professional communicator informs the audience. (D)	1.57
37.	A specialized education is an important preparation for a professional communicator. (PC)	-1.72
28.	The professional communicator challenges society's status quo. (D)	-1.75
19.	A professional communicator is the type of person who is able to suspend temporarily moral and ethical judgments for other considerations, i.e. objectivity and fairness. (PC)	-1.85
27.	A professional communicator has a "hidden agenda" behind his or her apparent purpose. (D)	-2.01
54.	A professional communicator occasionally has to be prepared to make some ethical compromises in the interests of getting the required job done. (D)	-2.04

agendas, aggressiveness, advocacy and withholding information. The two viewpoints differed on issues of accuracy, honesty, objectivity, fairness and the inviolability of one's own conscience.

These views were relatively distinct. The correlation betweeen the two is only .20, reinforcing this conclusion. Most issues dividing types PR-I and PR-II have to do with ethical responsibilities of professional communicators.

Table 4

Comparison of Types PR-I and PR-II: Most Differentiating Items

Item	PR-I	PR-II	Diff.
54. A professional communicator occasionally has to be prepared to make some ethical compromises in the interests of getting the required job done. (D)	1.190	-2.035	3.225
27. A professional communicator has a "hidden agenda" behind his or her apparent purpose. (D)	0.873	-2.005	2.878
9. Aggressiveness is a key trait of the professional communicator. (PC)	1.310	-1.234	2.545
42. It is the right of the professional communicator to advocate a particular position. (R)	2.218	-0.165	2.383
1. Forthrightness and honesty are personal characteristics of the professional communicator. (PC)	-1.088	1.606	-2.694
5. The professional communicator gives accurate information. (D)	-0.455	2.276	-2.731

Comparison of Journalistic and PR Roles

Comparison of Type J-I and Type PR-II

The comparison of types J-I and PR-II (for the most differentiating items, see Table 5) reveals distinctions over issues of constitutional freedom of the press, balance, objectivity, aggressiveness and protection of the public interest. Also, distinctions came in the areas of withholding information, advocacy, diplomacy, previous experience and ability to construct interesting messages.

Table 5

Comparison of Types J-I and PR-II: Most Differentiating Items

Item	J-I	PR-II	Diff.
33. A right of a professional communicator is protection under constitutional freedom of the press. (R)	1.198	-1.476	2.674
10. The professional communicator provides as much balance as possible on issues about which he or she reports. (D)	1.545	-0.996	2.540
53. The professional communicator keeps information from the audience in some cases--to help protect the organization on which he or she is reporting. (D)	-2.477	-0.034	-2.443

The issues dividing these types appeared to be relatively indistinct. The emphasis shifted from responsibilities to personal traits. For the first time in the comparison, aggressiveness, diplomacy and previous experience of the professional communicator appeared as key factors. Correlation of the factor arrays of types J-I and PR-II yielded a value of .49. This further supported the observation that some degree of similarity existed between these views of the two roles with differences quite mild. In other words, the PR practitioners' view of their own role had a moderate degree of similarity with the consensual view all respondents had of the journalistic role.

Comparison of Type J-I and Type PR-I

The sharpest contrast came between types J-I and PR-I (for the most differentiating items, see Table 6) over issues of objectivity, fairness, balance, accuracy and protection of the public interest. On the negative side, differences appeared on issues of withholding information, advocacy, hidden agendas and ethical compromises.

Correlation of factor arrays for types J-I and PR-I yielded a value of -.40. This tended to support the observation that there was a very discernible contrast between these views of the two roles. In other words, the journalists' view of the PR practitioner differed sharply from the consensual view of the journalistic role. This consensual view was also the way the journalists view their own role. Consequently, the journalists' view of the PR role was mildly negatively correlated with the way they view their own role.

DISCUSSION

The primary finding of this research was that journalists and public relations practitioners differ sharply over their perceptions of the public relations role, while both groups have similar perceptions of the journalistic role. Several aspects of the results confirm this conclusion, most notably the clear formation of two particular views of public relations, represented by types PR-I and PR-II.

Table 6

Comparison of Types J-I and PR-I: Most Differentiating Items

Item	J-I	PR-I	Diff.
7. A professional communicator takes an objective approach to most issues; he or she tries to avoid personal opinion entering in. (PC)	1.666	-2.117	3.783
44. The professional communicator seeks to provide fairness in reporting. (D)	1.823	-1.456	3.278
10. The professional communicator provides as much balance as possible on issues about which he or she reports. (D)	1.545	-1.733	3.277
5. The professional communicator gives accurate information. (D)	2.205	-0.455	2.660
50. The professional communicator protects the public interest. (D)	0.813	-1.586	2.399
25. The professional communicator remains independent of and resistant to favor-seekers. (D)	0.840	-1.187	2.027
3. A professional communicator has a diplomatic personality. (PC)	-0.993	1.144	-2.137
4. A professional communicator is able to persuade. (S)	-0.568	1.626	-2.194
22. A professional communicator may persuade his or her audience. (R)	-0.774	1.513	-2.286
27. A professional communicator has a "hidden agenda" behind his or her apparent purpose. (D)	-2.068	0.873	-2.941
54. A professional communicator occasionally has to be prepared to make some ethical compromises in the interests of getting the required job done. (D)	-1.942	1.190	-3.131
42. It is the right of the professional communicator to advocate a particular position. (R)	-1.724	2.218	-3.942
53. The professional communicator keeps information from the audience in some cases--to help protect the organization on which he or she is reporting. (D)	-2.477	1.728	-4.205

The implications of the research of role theorists Gross, McEachern and Mason would suggest that journalists who choose to enter public relations will suffer from inter-role conflict.[18] The perceived disparity between their old journalistic role and their new public relations role--verified by this research--should result in conflict. While the precise definition of inter-role conflict states that it is conflict arising when two contradictory roles are held simultaneously, nonetheless, inter-role conflict appears to have applications in job-changing situations as well.

Equally significant among conclusions from this research is the assertion that PR practitioners suffer from intra-role conflict. Intra-role conflict results when a person faces varying expectations from different audiences.[19] This research indicates that journalists hold one set of expectations about PR (Type PR-I), while PR people hold a different self-concept (Type PR-II). Our conclusion is that public relations professionals are faced with conflicting expectations about their role.

Demographic information on these respondents could be relevant. Educational and professional background, age, sex and income might provide interesting relationships with the "types." Though we have some of these data (Appendix B), we did not conduct such an analysis because our sample was small, being exploratory in nature. In addition, we must be

cautious in making inferences about our sample subjects which were drawn purposively in accordance with Q-method procedures.

Additional research into the types would be useful. Role theory suggests that persons who have contradictory expectations placed on their role suffer from intra-role conflict. Intra-role conflict appears to be a potential problem for public relations practitioners. Journalistic standards appear to contradict both PR people's self perception and management expectations of PR practitioners. If these practitioners indeed seek to idealize the journalistic role in their own practice, and management expects them to seek primarily the organization's interest, intra-role conflict exists. The implications of this could be studied among PR practitioners. Both inter-role conflict and intra-role conflict present provocative aspects of the journalist/PR practitioner relationship which deserve further study.

Research should build on this study's findings by determining the distribution of our three perceived types of professional communicators at several levels, including among practitioners, among media editors and among the general population. Research on how the types are distributed in relevant populations could yield valuable information for the professions. Such inquiry could be accomplished by utilizing a survey instrument defining the

three types, with appropriate response categories allowing respondents to associate themselves with a particular type.[2]

Notes

1. Dennis W. Jeffers, "Performance Expectations as a Measure of Relative Status of News and PR People," Journalism Quarterly (Summer, 1971):300.

2. Kent's study, for example, used role theory and Q-methodology to examine TV reporters perceptions of role expectations. (Patricia L. Kent, "Television Reporters' Perceptions of Role Expectations" Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1976.) Ferguson, as well as others, described the public relations role in terms of its most appropriate activities. (Mary Ann Ferguson, "Some Empirically-Generated Public Relations Roles and Associations With Various Descriptive Variables," Paper presented to the Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, Houston, Texas, August, 1979.) See also David M. Dozier, "The Diffusion of Evaluation Methods Among Public Relations Practitioners" (Paper presented to the Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, East Lansing, Michigan, August 9, 1981). Broom and Smith identified five major aspects of the public relations role. (Glen M. Broom and George D. Smith, "Testing the Practitioner's Impact on Clients," Public Relations Review 5 (Fall, 1979):47-59). In a separate study, Broom compared men's and women's roles in public relations, (Glen M. Broom, "A Comparison of Roles Played by Men and Women in Public Relations," Paper presented to the Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, Boston, Mass., August 12, 1980), while Dozier and Gottesman used Q-methodology to uncover various aspects of the PR role. They found four dimensions of the role, and associated these dimensions with right/left brain theory. (David M. Dozier and Michael Gottesman, "Subjective Dimensions of Organizational Roles Among Public Relations Practitioners," Paper presented to the Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, Athens, Ohio, July 26, 1982.)

3. Dennis W. Jeffers, "Performance Expectations As a Measure of Relative Status of News and PR People," p. 300.

4. Craig Aronoff, "Credibility of Public Relations For Journalists," Public Relations Review 1:2 (Fall, 1975):45-56.

5. Lee Feldman, "City Editor's Image of PR Man 'Blurred'" Editor & Publisher (July 22, 1961):36.

6. Dennis W. Jeffers, "Performance Expectations As a Measure of Relative Status of News and PR People," p. 306.

7. Neal Gross, Alexander W. McEachern and Ward S. Mason, "Role Conflict and Its Resolution," in Role Theory: Concepts and Research, eds. Bruce J. Biddle and Edwin J. Thomas (New York: Wiley, 1966), p. 288.

8. For a statement of William Stephenson's Q methodology, see the following of his principal published works: The Play Theory of Mass Communication (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967) and The Study of Behavior (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953). For a brief description of Q methodology, see Albert D. Talbott, "Q Technique and Its Methodology: A Brief Introduction and Consideration," Paper for Symposium entitled "The Use of Q-Methodology for Research in Educational Administration," 1971 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, February, 1971 (ERIC document order no. ED 060 040).

9. Other methodologies could be applied to ours or a similar research question. Coorientation measurement, for example, developed by McLeod and Chaffee, is a methodological tool which could be utilized to replicate this study. (See Jack M. McLeod and Steven H. Chaffee, "Interpersonal Approaches to Communication Research," in Interpersonal Perception and Communication, ed. S.H. Chaffee and J.M. McLeod, American Behavioral Scientist, vol. 16, No. 4, 1973, special edition, p. 484.

10. Dennis W. Jeffers, "Performance Expectations as a Measure of Relative Status of News and PR People," p. 300.

11. Patricia L. Kent, "Television Reporters' Perceptions of Role Expectations," p. 33.

12. These texts included the following: Scott Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982); Curtis D. MacDougall, Interpretative Reporting (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1977); Ken Metzler, Newswriting Exercises (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981); and Doug Newsom and Tom Siegfried, Writing In Public Relations Practice: Form & Style (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1981).

13. See William Stephenson, Newton's Fifth Rule, (Unpublished manuscript, 1975).

14. For a brief description of Q factor analysis as used in this study including the weighting procedures, see Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr., Thomas Danbury and Albert D. Talbott, "Analysis of Q-Sort Data," Worked Example Series: No. 1 (Iowa City: Iowa Center for Communication Study, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, 1975), or Alexander Nesterenko and Albert D. Talbott, "Centroid Factor Analysis," Worked Example Series: No. 3 (Iowa City, Iowa, Iowa Center for Communication Study, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, 1976). This is also discussed and described in the works previously cited which were authored by William Stephenson.

15. Anyone interested in a copy of a comprehensive appendix containing a set of tables detailing in full the descriptions of each of the types and the comparisons among them should contact Albert D. Talbott, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242.

16. Craig Aronoff, "Credibility of Public Relations for Journalists," p. 20.

17. Examples include Herbert J. Gans, Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time (New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, 1979); Philip Schlesinger, Putting 'Reality' Together: BBC News (London: Constable, 1978); and Gaye Tuchman, Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality (New York: The Free Press, A Division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., and London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1978).

18. Neal Gross, Alexander W. McEachern and Ward S. Mason, "Role Conflict and Its Resolution," pp. 287-88.

19. Ibid.

20. For description of such a methodology, see Albert D. Talbott, "The Q Block Method for Indexing Q Typologies," Paper presented to the Theory and Methodology Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, Lincoln, Nebraska, August, 1963.

APPENDIX A

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Items and Z-Scores

(NOTE: For purposes of guiding our research, we placed the items below in one of four categories: S=skills; D=duties; R=rights; and PC=personal characteristics.)

Item Descriptions	Typal Z Scores J-I	PR-I	PR-II
1. Forthrightness and honesty are personal characteristics of the professional communicator. (PC)	0.9	-1.1	1.6
2. A professional communicator has the right to non-discriminatory hiring policies. (R)	-0.0	0.6	-0.7
3. A professional communicator has a diplomatic personality. (PC)	-1.0	1.1	0.4
4. A professional communicator is able to persuade. (S)	-0.6	1.6	0.4
5. The professional communicator gives accurate information. (D)	2.2	-0.5	2.3
6. A professional communicator has the ability to construct interesting mass communications messages. (S)	0.3	1.2	0.8
7. A professional communicator takes an objective approach to most issues; he or she tries to avoid personal opinion entering in. (PC)	1.7	-2.1	-0.3
8. A professional communicator is generally a skeptical person. (PC)	-0.1	-0.9	-0.9
9. Aggressiveness is a key trait of the professional communicator. (PC)	0.6	1.3	-1.2
10. The professional communicator provides as much balance as possible on issues about which he or she reports. (D)	1.5	-1.7	-1.0
11. A professional communicator has the ability to construct clear mass communications messages. (S)	0.7	1.2	1.8
12. A professional communicator is skilled at research and investigation--at fact finding in general. (S)	1.4	-0.4	1.0
13. A professional communicator has the right not to violate his or her own conscience. (R)	0.6	-0.5	1.0
14. Previous experience is an important aspect of the professional communicator's qualifications. (S)	-0.3	-0.1	0.8
15. A professional communicator is a person who has a wide range of experiences. (PC)	-0.2	-0.7	0.3

APPENDIX A (cont.)

Item Descriptions	Typal Z Scores J-I	PR-I	PR-II
16. A professional communicator has the right to know a source of any information. (R)	-0.6	-1.0	-0.5
17. A professional communicator has the right to be heard by his or her superior. (R)	-0.1	0.4	0.5
18. A professional communicator is capable of perceiving an audience's needs. (S)	-0.4	0.4	0.4
19. A professional communicator is the type of person who is able to suspend temporarily moral and ethical judgments for other considerations, i.e. objectivity and fairness. (PC)	-0.5	-1.0	-1.9
20. A professional communicator is able to work well with other people without compromising his or her personal integrity and identity. (PC)	0.4	0.1	1.2
21. A professional communicator has the right of protection under his or her own professional code. (R)	-0.1	-0.4	-1.1
22. A professional communicator may persuade his or her audience. (R)	-0.8	1.5	-0.2
23. The professional communicator provides as complete information as possible on a subject. (D)	0.7	-0.7	0.6
24. Flexibility is a key trait of the professional communicator. (PC)	-0.2	0.2	0.8
25. The professional communicator remains independent of and resistant to favor-seekers. (D)	0.8	-1.2	-0.4
26. The professional communicator informs the audience. (D)	1.4	0.9	1.6
27. A professional communicator has a "hidden agenda" behind his or her apparent purpose. (D)	-2.1	0.9	-2.0
28. The professional communicator challenges society's status quo. (D)	-0.7	-1.0	-1.7
29. A professional communicator has a mastery of the language. (S)	0.3	1.0	0.7
30. A professional communicator's right of access and publication exists only to the extent that the subject or person being covered is discharging responsibility on the public's behalf. (R)	-0.8	-0.7	-0.7

APPENDIX A (cont.)

Item Descriptions	Typal Z Scores J-I	PR-I	PR-II
31. A professional communicator has the right to protect a source's identity from publication. (R)	0.5	-0.6	-0.2
32. A professional communicator has the capacity to see the interrelatedness of reality. (S)	-0.6	-0.9	0.1
33. A right of a professional communicator is protection under constitutional freedom of the press. (R)	1.2	-0.7	-1.5
34. A professional communicator has the right to protect a source's identity from editors and superiors. (R)	-0.8	-0.9	-0.6
35. A professional communicator is capable of perceiving an audience's desires. (S)	-0.4	0.7	0.3
36. A professional communicator has a curious mind. (PC)	0.9	-0.3	0.5
37. A specialized education is an important preparation for a professional communicator. (PC)	-1.3	-0.3	-1.7
38. A broad education is an important preparation for a professional communicator. (PC)	0.1	0.0	0.7
39. The professional communicator produces timely messages. (D)	0.7	1.0	0.5
40. The professional communicator makes complete and prompt correction of mistakes. (D)	0.9	0.0	1.3
41. A professional communicator is usually an intelligent person. (PC)	0.3	0.9	1.0
42. It is the right of the professional communicator to advocate a particular position. (R)	-1.7	2.2	-0.2
43. The professional communicator is obedient to supervisors or editors. (D)	-0.9	0.6	-0.1
44. The professional communicator seeks to provide fairness in reporting. (D)	1.8	-1.5	0.4
45. A professional communicator is generally one who wants to see democracy work, and who is motivated to serve its successful operation. (PC)	-0.1	-1.1	-0.9
46. A professional communicator has the right of free access to all his or her sources. (R)	-0.9	-0.5	-0.2
47. A professional communicator has the ability to make news content easily digestible; for the print media, to make it readable. (S)	0.9	1.2	1.0

APPENDIX A (cont.)

Item Descriptions	Typal Z Scores J-I	PR-I	PR-II
48. The professional communicator produces messages high in impact and proximity to the audience. (S)	0.0	0.9	0.4
49. The professional communicator places information in its proper cultural and historical context. (D)	0.0	-0.7	-0.1
50. The professional communicator protects the public interest. (D)	0.8	-1.6	-0.7
51. The professional communicator entertains the audience. (S)	-0.9	0.2	-0.8
52. A professional communicator has a working understanding of the printing process. (S)	-1.2	-0.1	-0.6
53. The professional communicator keeps information from the audience in some cases--to help protect the organization on which he or she is reporting. (D)	-2.5	1.7	-0.0
54. A professional communicator occasionally has to be prepared to make some ethical compromises in the interests of getting the required job done. (D)	-1.9	1.2	-2.0

Q Sort Distribution Used by Respondents

	Least Agree							Most Agree			
Pile Rating Letter:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Number of cards to be sorted in pile:	2	3	5	6	7	8	7	6	5	3	2

N=54

Demographic Data of Subjects

Subj.	Age	Degree	Sex	Organization	Salary	Prev. Exp. PR	Prev. Exp. Journ.
Journalists							
1	57	B.A. - Journ.	M	Newsp. (50,000+)	20M/40M	0	33
2	44	B.A. - Pol. Sci.	M	Newsp. (50,000+)	40M+	3	21
3	48	No Deg. - Architect.	M	Newsp. (5,000-)	20M/40M	0	20
4	24	B.A. - Soc./PR	F	Radio (5M/50M)	20M-	0	2
5	25	M.A. - Comm./Theatre Arts	M	Radio (50M+)	20M-	0	7
6	32	B.S. - Journ.	M	Newsp. (50M+)	20M/40M	0	7
7	36	B.A. - Sociology	M	Newsp. (5M/50M)	20M/40M	0	10
8	25	B.S. - Telecomm.	M	TV (50M+)	20M/40M	0	4
9	36	M.S. - TV/Radio	M	TV (50M+)	20M-	0	10
10	23	B.A. - Journ./Mass Comm.	M	Newsp. (5M/50M)	20M-	0	3
11	24	B.A. - Broad. Journ.	F	TV (50M+)	20M-	0	2
12	41	B.S. - Telecomm.	M	TV (50M+)	20M/40M	0	22
14	35	Unknown	M	Radio (50M+)	20M-	0	13
15	21	No Deg. - Journ.	M	Radio (5M/50M)	20M-	0	2
PR Practitioners							
16	45	M.A. - Journ./Pol. Sci.	M	Hospital	20M/40M	13	11
17	48	P.P.C. - Education	F	College	20M/40M	10	0
18	60	M.A. - Journ.	M	University	40M+	33	2
19	52	B.A. - Journ.	M	University	40M+	12	9
20	55	M.A. - Journ.	F	Corporation	20M/40M	11	5
21	39	B.A. - Eng./Speech	F	Corporation	20M/40M	5	5
22	43	B.S. - Chemistry	M	Utility	40M+	10	0
23	34	B.A. - Journ.	M	Corporation	20M/40M	1	0
24	38	B.A. - Journ.	M	Corporation	20M/40M	6	11
25	41	B.A. - Journ./Pol. Sci.	F	Hospital	20M/40M	7	10
26	48	B.S. - Journ.	M	College	20M/40M	13	13
27	28	B.A. - Speech/Eng./Sec. Educ.	F	Corporation	20M/40M	4	2
28	44	Ph.D. - Comm.	M	Service Org.	Unknown	3	0
30	34	M.A. - Comm.	F	Government	20M/40M	10	0
31	27	B.A. - Journ.	F	Service Org.	20M-	1	5